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*It's a long, long trip from Somaliland  
To the Arctic's cold salt spray;  
Yet any man with a book in hand  
Can view them in a day.*

DAVID COADY

# Rendezvous

DANIEL BOYLAN

WHEN HE OPENED his eyes and saw her beside him, he could not think how she had come or why she was there. She was sitting quietly, watching him, watching, waiting for him to awaken. He knew she had not been there when they brought him to the spot. Nor had she been on the train; he would have remembered her if she had been. He thought again of the train and how it had reminded him of a silver serpent. While he was within it, he had paced restlessly from its throat to its tail, and back again. It had sped through the night like a thing pursued, across the rises and slopes and over the swollen streams. Perhaps it had known the trip was doomed and was anxious to have it finished. He could hear again its anguished death-rattle as the railroad bridge collapsed beneath the combined pressure of the train's weight from above and the river's incessant pounding from below. Now the silver serpent was a mass of twisted wreckage. He had been one of the first to be taken from the wreck and had been carried on a stretcher to this spot, high above the raging waters of the flooded river. He knew that, since half of the serpent's body was under water, many of the passengers would not be taken from the wreckage. Their bodies would be washed downstream, and perhaps never found.

Now the pain shot through his body again, and as he grimaced, the girl at his side touched his cheek.

"Does it hurt very much, Toddie?" Her voice was low and comforting.

The pain subsided, even as she spoke, and he studied her with a puzzled stare. Her eyes burned sombrely in the light of

the gypsy bonfires kept ablaze to help the rescue crew and to warm them as they paused in their melancholy task.

"Who is this girl?" he thought, studying the mass of midnight that was her hair. It was years since anyone had called him "Toddie." Where had she come from, this girl who used a long-forgotten childhood nick-name? Her placid features had no claim on any of the pigeon-holes of his memory.

In her face she betrayed awareness of his bewilderment. She smiled again, and the touch of her fingertips on his forehead was like a cool breeze. But she did not speak, and though his body was wracked anew with the flashing pain, his curiosity would not die.

"Who are you?" he asked, in a voice scarcely audible. She did not answer, and he thought she had not heard. He braced himself for the effort of speaking again, wondering, doubting if he could raise his voice higher.

But before he had gathered the words in his throat the second time, she spoke. Her voice, ever so low, came to him as if wrapped in fog. Straining to hear her words, he became aware of the confusion and noise on the river bank below. He had not noticed it before; now it was an unbearable din that threatened his communion with the strange creature beside him. Her reply, like her voice, was heavily shrouded.

"An old friend."

In his annoyance at her vagueness, his own voice became stronger, more agitated.

"I don't know you. Why are you here?"



You should be down on the bank helping the others."

"Do you want me to go, Toddie?"

Irritably, he answered, "Yes, go! Leave me alone!" He had never been known for his sociability, and now his voice suggested the near-hysteria which her use of the long-forgotten nick-name had aroused.

"No!" A little calmer now, he paused. "No, wait. Why do you call me by that silly nickname? My name is Leonard. Leonard Stephen Pattersley, The Third."

"Yes, I know that is your name. But I have never liked Leonard Stephen Pattersley—The Third—very much. I liked the boy they called 'Toddie'."

"How do you know so much about me? Who are you anyway? What's your name?"

"My name would mean nothing to you, Toddie, but you may call me Judith. And I know many things about you. Several times I've been very close to you."

"Close to me? When?"

"Probably you won't remember, but once, when you were just a little boy—oh, maybe six or seven—you had pneumonia. You were very sick. You were in an oxygen tent and your mother and father prayed constantly that you'd recover. It would have been tragic for them to lose their only child."

The chimes of memory pealed back the years from Leonard's—or Toddie's—remembrances. He recalled the little hospital bed and the cellophane tent that held him prisoner. White-clad nurses fluttered about as old Dr. Webster stole anxious glances at his watch. A few feet from the bed Mr. and Mrs. Pattersley—his mother and father—had stood. His mother's eyes were red from weeping and her cheeks stained where the tears had fled. His father's iron features never changed till the day the cellophane tent was removed; his arm he kept locked tightly about his wife's waist.

As if from a far-off land, Toddie (nee

Leonard) murmured, "Yes, I remember."

He paused, then added, "But you couldn't have been more than five or six yourself. How can you remember all that?"

All the wisdom of the world was enshrined in Judith's face and knowing smile, but she did not answer his question.

"I can remember much more than that. The time you had the accident with the car and spent five weeks in the hospital—I was near-by then, too."

"You still haven't told me who you are, Judith. A nurse? You don't look a bit familiar to me."

Judith smiled again, one of those strange and knowing smiles that suggested she kept some fabulous secret, or *all* the fabulous secrets in the whole world.

"Perhaps you might call me a nurse, Toddie. I've never thought of it that way. I relieve some people of their pain; others I plunge into a misery far worse than pain."

"How are you feeling now?"

"Fine. No pain for several minutes. I guess talking to you has charmed it all out."

"Your grandmother said something like that to me years ago. I seem to be a comfort to your whole family."

Bitterness hung on his voice like crinkling icicles as he claimed, "I have no family."

"You shouldn't say that, Toddie. You've said and done so many foolish things already—and hurt so many people. You've been so stubborn!"

"It's they who were stubborn, not I. When I stopped going to church, they said they wanted nothing more to do with me. They were too old-fashioned, too set in their ways to understand the things I learned at the University. I didn't care if *they* went to church, but I couldn't stand for their everlasting trying to make *me* go."

"But they believed in their religion, Toddie. If a person believes in something firm-



ly, he feels bound to pass its truths on to his children. Couldn't you have been more gentle with them? Where has your hatred gotten you?"

"Maybe I made a mistake when I asked you not to leave. Because I'm flat on my back, you take advantage of me and start preaching a sermon. You'd best go down on the bank."

The resentful gruffness of his voice would have deterred the average person from staying at his side, but the girl did not move. A drizzle of rain was beginning and the reflection from the bonfires caught the drops in her hair and made them sparkle like fireflies. She gazed at the boy on the hillside, compassion and disgust mingled in her eyes.

"Toddie, even on her death-bed your mother never gave up hope that you'd return. Her last words were a prayer for you. You should have come. You had the telegram in plenty of time."

"Get away from me! Get down the bank and leave me alone! You sit there like an avenging angel and preach to me and condemn my life, and I don't even know who you are. Well, I don't care who you are—I just want you to leave me alone! Get away!"

"You're right, Toddie, I must be getting down the bank. I've stayed with you too long already, and there is work to be done below. But you're first, Toddie. Are you ready to go?"

Something about the sudden air of authority which she had assumed, and the regal bearing of her stance when she arose, filled Leonard Stephen Pattersley—The Third—with apprehension. His eyes narrowed to thin slits, his chest rose and fell a little faster, his fists clenched till the knuckles were white. But his voice was smooth and low.

"Tell me who you are."

It was at that moment that the compas-

sion in her eyes became dominant and the disgust vanished.

"Haven't you guessed who I am, Toddie: how I know so much about your close escapes and your kinfolk's lives?"

Suddenly he knew, and she was aware of it. Still, he would not put his knowledge into words; he would not accept that which closed in on him like a trap. She moved nearer, and her height seemed limitless as he gazed into her eyes from his spot on the ground. He could not look away.

"This is death."

He did not move. His breathing was harder and faster, and he clenched and unclenched his fists desperately.

"No," he whispered hoarsely. "Not yet. I'm not ready. I haven't been to church in months—or prayed. Give me a little time. Don't take me like this. Please, don't take me like this!"

"Oh, Toddie. You're just like all the rest. In your life you deny your Creator and cast aside His mandates; but when your time comes to die, you beg for leave to make your peace with Him. How much trouble you could have saved everyone if you'd overcome your pride during your life and submitted to His will."

"Judith, you must give me time. Don't let me die like this. Just a little while—just half an hour, Judith, that's all I ask." He sounded like a desperate gambler, and, indeed, he was, for his eternity hinged on her answer. She stared down at him as if unable to decide. Her voice was weary, but she answered to his satisfaction.

"Very well, Toddie, half an hour. But I can't meet you here then. Let me think—I'll meet you in half an hour on—the road to Vevay. And remember, Toddie, you can't escape me. Half an hour—on the road to Vevay!"

Half an hour, half an hour. Thirty minutes to examine a conscience hidden for



years beneath the ideals of an atheistic materialism. His brain hummed as life began to flash before him in a mad and savage pageant. He was caught in the grip of a whirlpool; and as it sucked him down into its very core, he lived again the incidents that had led to his estrangement with his church, and then with his family. His first few weeks in the large State university, the months of indecision and doubt that followed: One does not easily relinquish the beliefs of a lifetime. He often thought of his college career as a four-year taffy pull, for that was the way his conception of God had been taken from him: slowly, so gradually that he was hardly aware of it until it was done. Then came the scenes with his parents, their refusal to tolerate his Godlessness, the mounting bitterness reaching its crescendo when he left home. He had never written to his parents or gone to see them after that. Through lawyers he had learned of his father's death, and now it was the reading of his mother's will that was finally bringing him home. In his father's will he had not even been mentioned, but his mother had made him sole beneficiary. Why had she done it? He wanted no part of the estate or of his home town. He would sell the property and get back to the city as soon as possible. Still the whirlpool sucked him down; seemingly he could not benefit from his half-hour of grace.

It could not have been more than a few minutes after Judith had gone that they came to take him away. It probably was at least forty-five minutes since he had been taken from the wreckage, but the accident had occurred some distance from a town, and the flooded condition of the roads made the spot difficult to reach. The scene was not clear to him. After Judith left, the pains had returned and he was aware of the taste of blood in his mouth. This, coupled with the mental strain of his meeting with Ju-

dith, reduced him to a state of only semi-awareness of his surroundings. He remembered hearing the white-jacketed interne calling, "Let's get this one to an ambulance, Bill. Looks bad." They had placed him on a stretcher and hurried to an ambulance in what was for him a veritable nightmare of pain. Just as they reached the ambulance the rain started coming down harder; and after they had settled him in the rear of the vehicle, the interne jerked a raincoat from the back and pulled it on while muttering a few obscene oaths.

"Better go on, Bill, I'll have to stay here. Take him to the hospital in Madison. Go back to the highway, take the second road to the left. And hurry. But be careful, Bill. The roads are slippery as hell. Get back as soon as you can. We'll need every ambulance we can get tonight."

Leonard could hear every word the interne had said, and he surmised that he was one of the first to be taken to a hospital. Then the full import of the interne's words struck him. The driver had been instructed to go to the hospital at Madison—the interne had directed him to the road to Madison, not the road to Vevay! Judith had told Leonard she would meet him in half-an-hour on the road to Vevay! The half-hour wasn't far from being gone, and he was on his way to Madison.

"You can't escape me," she'd said. "You can't escape me!" He began to laugh in an uncontrollable and hysterical manner. He could feel the speed of the ambulance increase; he knew the driver was alarmed, but he didn't care. Nothing could happen to him now. He was safe. He had cheated death! His laughing continued until he cried in a voice that could only have come from one demented, "I'm not sorry for anything, and I won't bow down. I've cheated You, do You understand, I've cheated You!"

But his laughter was checked by the

screech of brakes as the ambulance skidded to a stop. The driver rolled down his window and in a few seconds the plop-plop of running footsteps sounded through the driving rain.

"You can't get through here," a male voice panted. "Bridge out."

"But I'm on my way to Madison. We're just starting to evacuate the injured from the train wreck back yonder. We've got to get them to a hospital somewhere. This guy here's in bad shape."

The voice from the outside increased its volume in order to be heard over the rain. It had been easy for Leonard to hear it before. Now its every word rushed to the rear of the ambulance and echoed again in his ears.

"Turn around and go back to the fork,"

the voice said. Take the road to the left. You can get through to a hospital that way."

The voice started away again but the ambulance driver stuck his head out the window and yelled angrily, "Wait a minute—where does that road go?"

From fifty feet away the voice cried back, and its shriek was an ultimatum as it pierced the night and the downpour.

"Over to Switzerland County. It's the road to Vevay!"

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Not long after, the ambulance shrieked to a stop before the Switzerland County Hospital. But its haste had been in vain. Minutes before, on the road to Vevay, a rendezvous had been kept.

## Symphony

*My Love's a symphony of sight and sound,  
A concerto of harmony and rhythm.*

*Her hair is a golden overture, a soft  
And honeyed melody of downy pianissimo.*

*Her hands, like cameos of grace,  
Are movements of a dainty, dulcet fugue.*

*Her eyes, at times, are Wagnerian arias, deep-toned and  
Profound, sonorous throbbings of stormy discontent;  
Or, like placid blue ponds, lyre-strummed sonatas of peace.*

*Her laughter is allegro, like a tiny silver bell; a purling  
Peal of happiness, a lilting ballad of joy.*

*A sigh from her is a sibilant serenade,  
A wafted strain of silkiness in a muffled phrase.*

*My Love's a symphony of sight and sound,  
A concerto of harmony and peace.*

JOHN CUMMINGS



# "How to Become an Exile"

DAVID COADY

A FEW HOURS AGO, I was a happy man. Then, I could have faced even a cold egg with a smile, shaved with tepid water, or even braved the rigors of creamless tea.

But now—O woe!—I stand in an agony of irreparable shame, my aching pate filled with the contemplation of a barren life, a life without friends. For today, they found out. In a few words, my crime is this:

I can't play bridge.

It's true. I am a broken man, a blotch upon the escutcheon of society, and what's more, there's nothing I can do about it. There I was, immersed in a cup of coffee, thinking innocently of the goodness of life, when suddenly they burst upon me like a pack of hungry jackals. They numbered three all told.

"Oh, look!" cried the first. "We've found one!"

This is odd, I thought, here's old Steve behaving most strangely.

"We're going to play bridge!" shouted the second. "We couldn't find a fourth, but here you are, and you just simply must play."

"Well, now," I said, "you see, I don't play bridge."

"What!"

"You don't play bridge?"

"But surely you must!"

"You can't mean it!"

"Come now, old fellow."

"Gad!"

They seemed excited. Well, if they intended to make such an issue of a mere fad, I certainly wasn't going to let it spoil the day. I braced myself with a huge sip of coffee. "I was only joking you know. Ha ha ha. Of course I'll play."

They retrieved their teeth and we began the game. Joy was in my heart as I realized I had just been accepted as one of the boys. In truth, I wasn't too worried. Why, in my younger days, if I may say so, I had been rather proficient at Old Maid, Seven Up and Charades. With such a background, I felt quite confident that I could bear myself well.

I was given 13 cards. Noticing how suspiciously my opponents watched each other, I twisted my face into a ghastly leer, and when they all said "Pass," I too said "Pass."

"Who's got all the aces?" they all said at once.

Strangely, I had them all, every last one.

Steve appraised me coldly. "Why didn't you bid?"

Jackal number two came to my rescue just in time. "Oh, I know," he said in tones of awe, "they don't even have a partial and everyone passed, and he knew he couldn't get to Blackwood. Right, old man?"

"Why, yes," I mumbled. "I rarely go there anyway."

This brought a huge laugh, restored harmony, and they gave me some new cards. This time the jackal sitting across the table from me leapt into the upper atmosphere, at the same time screaming, "Two Spades!"

Well, I thought, who does this fellow think he is, Culbert Stun? I had six spades myself, so just to show him up, I shouted back "Six Spades!"

He regained consciousness shortly, and said, "Lay your hand on the table."

I did.

"No, no, I mean your cards."

"Oh."

Right then was when they began to suspect I didn't know how to play. This became more evident when one of them gazed my way and said, "It's fun being the dummy, isn't it?"

An insulting remark, that, yet I remained a gentleman, and watched closely for a chance to divert the conversation. Finally it came.

"I've got my book now," this fellow said. "Oh, that's wonderful!" I sighed in relief. "I certainly do like books, you know? Why, many a time, I've picked up a book and just haven't been able to put it down, and then—dash it all, don't look at me that way—what's wrong, don't you like books?"

No one answered, and when the next round was dealt, I passed four times in an abashed tone of voice.

They let me keep the cards though, mainly because they must have overlooked me during the frightful excitement after jackal number three said "Grand Slam in Hearts." In fact, I even got to play. That was relatively simple, because when they played a certain suit, I had only to play the same suit, and that would seem to suffice. I saved the Queen of Hearts for last,

though, because it was the only one I had, and after all, I know that in some games, the last trick is worth two points.

When, at last, I bravely laid the Queen upon the table, this fellow across from me shot up into the ozone once more, shrieking out the following motto: "Vulnerable, Doubled and Re-doubled! Set! O Bliss!"

I felt pretty good for scoring those two points, but then Steve too suddenly leapt up and bellowed out "No! This can't be! It's not true! He reneged!" He danced angrily about, wildly brandishing his scoring pencil.

"You," he cried.

"Me," I squeaked.

"Yes, you, you fraud! You leech upon the fair bosom of society! Sir, leave these premises immediately!"

And so—there is the woeful tale. I have been scourged from the walks of intelligent men, and know not what to do. I have considered a retreat to the African Transvaal, but—Alas!—I find upon research that there are three missionaries in that area, and no doubt they are hunting a fourth for bridge.

## Death

*Cool hands caress a crinkled skin  
For the last time.  
Protoplasmic people weave and merge  
In myriad shapes;  
Then, the forms fade wistfully away,  
And an instant of stark insanity  
Screams into the soul!  
Lengthens to an eternity of madness  
Or, vanishes forever  
In the soft, warm glow  
Of God.*

DAVID COADY



# Ants Are Fascinating Creatures

JAMES CRAMER

WHEN THE ANT is called to mind, he is usually associated with that virtue of perseverance which grade-school texts consider very important. Generally known as "Bright-eyes," he is held up as a paragon of virtue. A little research, however, shows that there are many other interesting phases in the life of the ant. For instance, witness the story of the Amazons . . .

All ants will protect their nests against attack, but some have developed great armies that march long distances and attack insects or other animals that they meet on their path. The Amazons, or slave-makers, are of this type. They organize raids upon the nests of other species for the purpose of stealing eggs and kidnapping their young. Usually, however, the cause of these piratical raids is necessity. The Amazons are warriors and their claws are too large to permit eating; therefore, they kidnap other ants and make the captives feed them.

Ants, as well as bees and wasps, belong to the order of Hymenoptera and are members of the broader class Insecta. The name of the order comes from two Greek words: *hymen*, meaning membrane, and *petron*, meaning a wing. It refers to the fact that the members of this order have wings of a delicate, membranous texture. There are four of these wings, arranged in pairs, those before being the larger. The mouth-parts are formed for biting and sucking, while the abdomen is usually furnished with a stinger.

Although most species of the bee and wasp are social and live in communities, some are solitary in their habits. The lat-

ter, however, is not true of the ant. All species of ants are social, many individuals working together to make a common nest. In fact, their social life in some instances is carried to the greatest extreme known in nature. In cooperation with one another, they build elaborate structures in which to live; they carry on agriculture, make war on each other, and enslave their own kind. They even domesticate animals. Some noted biologists believe that ants go so far as to domesticate more animals than does man.

The social community of ants is built around the queen. She is the central figure about which everything revolves. But she is not a queen in the ordinary sense of the word, because she does not rule. She is, simply, the mother of all the ants in her community. The young female queen lives her life unnoticed until the mating season. Then the virgin queen and the males perform what is known as the "nuptial flight." Only the queens and males have wings and they use them but once, on this flight. The males live only a short time afterwards. Weak and unable to provide for themselves, they soon die of starvation or fall prey to their many enemies. As for the queen, soon as she lands, she bites or breaks off the wings that she has used. For the rest of her life, she will be a voluntary prisoner beneath the ground.

The fertile insect begins her subterranean existence by digging a little chamber in the soil. Her first act is to lay eggs. Out of these hatch soft, translucent, legless grubs. These offspring are fed with the saliva of the queen. For weeks, the queen is unable to obtain food for herself; so during this time she lives by digesting the now-useless



wing muscles. The grubs upon reaching maturity take up the labor for their sovereign. Brood after brood are hatched and reared, and as each becomes a finished product it assumes its share of responsibility. Thus, by the end of the season, the young queen becomes a royal mother of a loyal army of supporters, workers, and soldiers.

Because the first offspring of the queen receives less food than the grubs that come later, they are usually smaller than average. And as the colony grows, the job of caring for the young is turned over to the workers. The larvae are equipped with spines and ridges at the base of the jaw which, when rubbed together, provide a shrill sound and attract the attention of the workers who care for them. The workers carry the eggs, larvae, and cocoon about in their mouth and place all of the young in one section of the nest. The members of an American species have been seen to bring the larvae and pupae out in the cool of the evening and carry them about much as human nurses would. In return for this attention given to the young by the workers, the young produce a sweetish secretion which is eagerly sought by the parents or nurses. As a matter of fact, much of the solicitude that ants lavish on their young undoubtedly owes its origin to their craving for this delectable secretion.

As soon as the grubs are full-grown, they spin a cocoon around themselves. These cocoons are what are sold as "ant eggs" for goldfish or canaries. It is within these tiny silken shells that the grubs change into adult ants. The grubs lie for a few days in these shells under the watchful eyes of the worker ants, which gauge with perfect accuracy the period of pupation, and at the proper time, rip open the cocoon. The puny mites are tended and watched at every stage by the workers un-

til they are able to provide for themselves.

It takes years before a colony becomes well established. Some times the queen is killed by a fungus growth in the damp soil, but if she lives, ordinarily she is soon able to turn the care of the young over to the workers and to devote herself to laying eggs. Some queens have been known to live for eighteen years, during which time they never left the nest. And unlike honeybees, the ant queen feels no hostility towards younger queens. Actually, the latter sometimes return to the home colony after the mating flight and add their eggs to those of the original queen, thus swelling the population of the insect city.

But perhaps the strangest phenomenon in connection with queens is the one reported in Africa. At the end of the mating flight, this female ant descends and wanders about in front of the nest of a different species. The workers of this species stream out, capture her, and drag her by the legs and antennae into the nest. Here they attempt to kill her, but she takes refuge on the back of the larger queen which has founded the colony. She remains for hours in this position, chewing off the head of her host. By the time the original queen has been decapitated, the invader has acquired the nest odor and is accepted by the workers. They will bring up her offspring. In the end, all the original workers die out, and the interloper is queen of the colony.

Moreover, some queens among the tropical ants are more than a hundred times the size of the workers of the same species. When the queen leaves on the "nuptial flight," they accompany her by attaching themselves to her legs. Consequently, when she lands, the workers are there to help establish the new colony.

As for their dwellings, there are as many forms of ant nests as there are species of



ants. Sometimes the nest is a simple tunnel in the ground; sometimes a tunnel in a decayed tree or a large mound filled with galleries and passageways. Interesting to note in this connection is a species of ants in the mountains of Switzerland. This species always builds its nests in an elongated form running east and west. Travelers who are lost can find their direction by running their hands along the top of the mound.

Ants likewise have a peculiar characteristic of feeding. Most of the food they eat is retained in a sort of crop rather than in the stomach. Then by a process of regurgitation, the ants can bring this food from the crop to feed other members of the colony. The honey ants of the species *Myrmecocystus* furnish the most remarkable example of this characteristic. The workers of these groups cling to the roof of their mound-like nest and serve as reservoirs for the storing of honey. They swallow so much honey that their abdomens are distended and they are unable to move. For the remainder of their lives they will act as living, animated pantries for those in need.

Ants are both carnivorous and vegetarian. They eat meat, seeds, vegetable matter and honeydew. This factor has enabled them to survive in many different regions and circumstances. They not only hunt for their food but produce it. Two of the most remarkable examples of "ant husbandry" are the activities of the harvester-ants and the leaf-cutting ants.

The harvester-ants diligently collect seeds and store them in underground granaries. When the grain becomes wet, these ants bring it to the surface and spread it out to dry. Before taking the seeds into the nest, the insects bite the seeds in two, thus preventing the seed from growing. In some species of the harvester-ants, the larger soldier insects have the job of crushing the

grain so the smaller workers can get the food inside.

The leaf-cutter ants of the genus *Atta* likewise have a peculiar method of securing food. Some of the workers cut out the choice pieces of leaves and carry them back to the nests. Here they roll the leaves into balls which are taken down into the colony. On these balls of leaves, a fungus, *Royctes ganglophora*, is cultivated. The ants then regulate the growth of this fungus so that they have a continuous food supply.

But besides having their own storehouses and gardens, certain species of ants keep herds of other insects in order to increase the food supply. In return for their nourishment, the ants give these insects, of which the aphids and certain caterpillars are the most common, protection from other hostile insects. The soft-bodied aphids suck enormous quantities of sweetish juices from plants but digest only a portion of it. The balance, concentrated by the extraction of a considerable amount of water, passes through their bodies and exudes as a syrupy liquid known as honeydew. This is eagerly sought after by all ants. Likewise, caterpillars of the *Lucaenidae* family exude, from a gland opening, a sweetish secretion used by ants as food for the grubs and larvae.

As far back as one may search in the entomological literature of the past, he will find traces of the ant and his highly organized social life. Actually, today there are more than two thousand species which have already been described, with the possibility of an additional two thousand others which have not yet been classified. Thus, the ant, besides being one of the oldest of known insects, will probably be numbered among the last forms of life upon this earth.

A truly fascinating creature, indeed: the ant.

# Comrade E. J.

GAINES BATEMAN

Comrade E. J.—

Rise up! Wiggle out from under the heel of the oppressor! (Tickle his foot, if necessary). Do not longer allow yourself to remain on the insignificant side of a “/.”

Yours for a classless society,  
H. C.

It was simply that—an impulse unchecked. Almost daily for twenty-one months Harry Cummings had read correspondence from the head office and almost daily for twenty-one months he had noted that symbol of economic mysticism: ECM/ej. It took on the proportions of an obsession that harried him and then quietly and finally tricked him into writing the letter.

Having performed the deed, he had certain misgivings. He thought it was a stupid, school-boy, sort of letter, but in an undeniable way was glad he had mailed it. He wondered about the uncertain position in which the letter would place the recipient, should the president of the company read it—there had been no other choice than to address it to the head office and to mark it carefully: Attention secretary. He wondered about the uncertain attitude of the president—should he read the letter—toward such irregular conduct in a subordinate. Having performed the deed, he had nothing to do but to muse, now favorably, now unfavorably, over his impulsiveness and to await results.

Kind Comrade Sir—

Your courageous letter, with the genuine, sympathetic concern for my plight that it evidenced, inspired me to consider it something more than just

another means a gentleman uses “to make a play for a lady.” Your deep understanding of social problems, your delicate social consciousness, I might say, must be a source of great comfort to your poor, fellow proletarians. Indeed I found it so.

I am but an unimportant working-girl suffering under a capitalistic tyranny. My understanding of these evils is very little. But if you must enlighten me about them, write a book and I’ll buy a copy.

E. J.

Harry tried for a week or more to forget about the whole thing. To begin with, it was childish. One would think he had nothing to do but sit in his office, collect Dewey buttons, and wonder about the secretaries in the larger offices of the company. But she could have at least given him her address. Did she think he was going to be cut short as though he had naughtily tried to flirt with a nice girl and was properly spanked for it? Not he!

Comrade E. J.—

So the old, capitalistic dog read my letter! I’ll bet he sorts the stuff and deliberately looks for the ones marked: Attention secretary. The senile, old goat is probably a part time government spy.

Your plight does touch me deeply and I see that I must help you despite yourself!

Yours for the cause,  
H. C.

Quite likely E. J. would never have answered, and Harry suspected as much,



though he refused to harbor the suspicion consciously. On the other hand, he would admit to be consciously responsible for the flood of Communistic books and pamphlets and the subscription to the *Daily Worker* that hit the head office shortly after his second letter reached it. This particular stroke of genius evoked a couple of responses—one from the capitalistic old dog in terse terms of common, business parlance to the effect that a subordinate's position could not be considered more stable than his emotions and that the case in question presented due reason for grave concern. The other was the desired one.

Dear Mr. Cummings—

You've succeeded in bringing havoc to this office. Mr. Michlin is in a continual state of distemper, a thing of unbearable consequences in view of the fact that his dictation is never good even under the most ideal conditions. I am forced to have my nightmares in the daytime because of my sleepless nights.

Honest, I can't even paint my toenails red in the quiet of my own room without expecting to be called before a Senate Investigating Committee. Please, no more Communistic books, no more comradeship! I like being on the insignificant side of a "/." But, if you must protest, my name and address is Edith Jordan, Box 944, San Francisco, California.

Reluctantly,  
E. J.

Celebration was in order that evening, so Harry stopped in at a bar after leaving the office, toasted himself on his success and forthwith set out for his quarters, his pen and ink.

A week or more passed with Harry setting out from the office each evening for his quarters, his pen and ink. He had writ-

ten a lot of words but no letter. Much of the time he walked the streets contemplating the pink glow of Roseville at night.

Another week passed. In desperation he dashed off a last minute letter and immediately mailed it with the grim aplomb of a fatalist.

Dear Miss Jordan—

Without question my actions of the past few weeks have been those proper to adolescence. I could attempt an explanation, but why confuse you when when I can do no more than that for myself.

I won't say I'm sorry. However, if I've caused you embarrassment, I would like an opportunity to make amends.

Sincerely,  
Harry Cummings

Apparently the glow of San Francisco at night and the pens and ink there are not troublesome things. Harry got his reply rather quickly. One of those typically feminine, and therefore mellowing things. No, he didn't have to make amends. No, she wasn't really angry. There was a little embarrassment at first but—

Harry's response was a typically masculine, and therefore mellowed reaction. While he drank in such phrases as:

You should have seen old Everett's—I mean Mr. Michlin's—face the day he read your second letter. Dorothy, my roommate (she works here too), says that if I had been a new girl, he probably would have fired me to save himself embarrassment . . .

he became infused with exactly the knowledge that a more cautious, emotionless man would have suspected she wanted him to be infused with. Gathering together all his powers of perspicacity, Harry concluded that his correspondent was a keen-minded,



fun-loving, young lady who had migrated to the city of San Francisco, found employment with the same company as he and now shared an apartment with a fellow employee. He didn't notice it, but there was a new note of intimacy in his next letter, and it began a formidable growth in subsequent ones.

\* \* \*

Up to this point Harry Cummings's life had been but a proximation of the lives of numerous young men of his times. Harry was dimly aware of this fact. From this point on his life was still to be but a proximation of the lives of numerous young men of his times. But, of this fact nothing short of communication from the State Department could convince him. He was suddenly wearing the coat of many colors; the world had become a frenzy of activity. He had hardly dampened his big toe when he was swept into the heart of the current.

The supervisor of the large offices of the company at Sacramento finally died and his successor was named, a middle-aged addict of breath killers from the Stockton office who was outwardly distressed and inwardly jubilant. In keeping with the customs of the firm he threw a party for his less fortunate colleagues, who were outwardly jubilant and inwardly distressed. Harry was one of their number, though in a distracted manner.

The scene of the big affair was the elaborate Royall Oak Hotel, the pride of Sacramento. It was chosen because it offered the most attractive facilities for general intemperance. Certainly it offered little room for anything else. It was here that Harry found himself crowded back into the tip end of the small bar room, built in the shape of, and having the name, Acorn.

The Acorn Room, it seems, was appropriately named for several obvious reasons which were invariably proclaimed by each

new patron on his initial visit, or were dismally recounted by the more insensible, regular patron. Harry, in his corner, had tagged the reasons and was keeping a popularity score on the table surface, when the greeting "Harry, my boy!" forced its way through the crowd followed by four persons in single file.

"Harry," the voice belonged to the new Sacramento Supervisor, Martin Warren, "Harry, I want you to meet Harry—"

"Bateman," the first man supplied.

"He's in charge of the Fresno office, and Harry—"

"Rowlerski," the second man came through.

"He's at the Grass Valley office. Boys," Warren continued with pleased anticipation, "Believe it or not, this is Harry, er, a—"

"Cummings!" Cummings supplied at length, thinking, "If I'm to be part of your routine, we'll have to rehearse a little more."

"Cummings," Warren's flushed abated a little, "has the Roseville office. Oh! I'm terribly sorry!" the flush renewed itself as he turned quickly to the fourth member of the newcomers, a thin young lady, "This is Miss Jensen, Harry. Besides myself, the newest addition to Sacramento's office."

"Pleased to meet you, Miss Jensen." It was the only acknowledgment Cummings made. Actually, he had been introduced to the other two earlier in the banquet hall, before Warren had the opportunity to segregate the Harrys.

There was the usual tussle and juggling and the hailing of the waitress as the group squeezed into what Cummings was beginning to consider his private vantage point. The round of drinks came, for which Cummings paid. And Warren began to speak of his singular success in sales promotion at Stockton over the past twenty years, with a hint in his voice that it was no little



contribution to his recent rise in the business world.

"You look distressed, Mr. Cummings."

Miss Jensen sat next to Cummings and her remark drew him apart from the others, letting Warren drive on.

"I am distressed," he replied, succumbing easily to her smile.

"I'm about to have a fit of apoplexy. It's one of the thousand black curses Cromwell laid upon my ancestors, and my only hope of warding it off is to be led to fresh air by the dainty hand of a pretty maid. Would you grant me that act of mercy?"

"Not entirely," she answered. "I'll compromise. I'll accompany you to fresh air but you lead the way through this mob."

Out on the street, the air was cool and clear and abundant, but of a sudden words had become a frozen commodity. The two walked several blocks without talking, and Harry wondered if fresh air had a coagulating effect upon conversation.

"Don't say it," she suddenly protested.

"Say what?"

"Oh, where's your home? How long have you been with the company? Do you like it? And so on. Wasn't that what you were thinking?"

"No," he answered.

"Then I'm disappointed."

"You needn't be. It had to do with us and walking and talking and breathing."

"I see." There was an impish glint in her eye. "You wrestle with all the tough problems of life."

He groaned. "Remind me to give the virtues of apoplexy a deeper consideration."

There was silence again. Shops of every sort with bright display windows slipped by quietly.

"Match you for a cup of coffee," she said, giving him a puzzled, questioning glance.

He laughed easily. "You're using your feminine wiles on me. You think my masculine gallantry will come forth and that I will say 'no, I'll buy the coffee.' You're mistaken. I'll let you match me."

They both laughed easily as he shouldered open the door of a bright chrome and glass cafe.

"Come to think of it, it doesn't seem such a bad idea to ask you a few questions about yourself, Miss Jensen." He stopped, playing with his spoon and spoke to her directly.

"Elizabeth," she corrected him.

"Elizabeth," he repeated. Then playfully, "Mine's Harry, Elizabeth."

"Yes, I know, Mr. Warren told me."

They laughed once more.

"Well—as I was saying, what are you doing here?"

"Drinking coffee," she parried. Again there was the impish glint.

"I meant the old routine, but, no doubt, you want to play the mysterious lady."

"Tell you what," she smiled, "Just as soon as I'm certain you're an honest man, I'll let you read my diary."

He mimicked the expression of a foiled villain.

"I had hoped to escort you home tonight, my pretty one. But, if you are going to place restrictions upon me, I shall merely take you back to the brawl."

After an hour or so of verbal tag, Harry did escort Elizabeth home, and in his best Victorian manner politely held her hand and acknowledged her rescue of him from a boring evening. Even were it his best Modern manner, he felt exactly that with honesty. It puzzled him as he drove back to Roseville. For the first time he was aware of the ground he had covered in his paper and ink affair with E. J.

"The power of the mighty pen," he mused. "Well, at least it keeps a man chaste."

\* \* \*

Monday morning felt Harry's brisk pace stir the sharp autumn air. His steps smacked brightly on the sidewalk and the noise went shimmering playfully about the street.

"The gods have spiked the atmosphere," he thought. Sucking in deeply, he let it out leisurely with the afterthought, "Glutton!"

His assistant, his book-keeper, his secretary and his office boy all in the person of one, thin, middle-aged creep met him at the entrance to his office.

"Good morning, Hardy. What's in the mail?"

It was Hardy's duty to pick up the mail at the post office each morning and noon as he came to work.

"Good morning, Mr. Cummings."

Hardy always addressed Harry formally, but they had a more subtle basis of familiarity. Harry knew that Hardy had long been aware of his snitching of Hardy's *Western Stories*, even though Hardy continued to read them in secrecy.

"There's another personal letter for you from San Francisco."

"Good!" Harry had always meant it before, when he received letters from E. J. Today, he wondered, "Too much coffee lately, perhaps."

Dear Harry—

The mail box yielded nothing but disappointment today. You prepared me I know—the big party at Sacramento—, but I was rather surprised to feel an unfulfilled need for some word from you. You see, your cheer has become sustenance for my spirit.

Once more the realization struck Harry that he had covered quite a bit of ground in his correspondence with E. J.

. . . I blushing admit that I often

reread your letters. Therefore, I may say with unquestioned authority that you have stated, no less than eight times, your intention to come to San Francisco. Perhaps it is unlady-like to mention this, but I prefer to call it romantic pioneering, my challenge to convention . . .

Harry finished the letter, put it down, turned in his chair toward the window, leaned back and stared out at nothing.

"Why so profound, Harry, old boy?" he thought. "You haven't had enough contact with her to catch a stray germ, much less contract a complex!"

"There's several other letters from the head office, Mr. Cummings."

Hardy's remark swung Harry back around to reality. He picked up the correspondence and began to thumb through it. One letter in particular caught his attention.

"Hardy!" he exclaimed presently, "You've got a new boss!"

"Beg pardon, sir?"

"You've got a new boss. The assistant supervisor at Sacramento has been transferred to Stockton. I've been given his job. And a new man is coming to take mine."

"If that's the case, Mr. Cummings, may I ask that you return my last copy of *Western Story*? I didn't quite finish it."

"Hardy, I love you! You can have them ALL back!"

\* \* \*

Life in Sacramento was much like life in Roseville. But Harry detected a ring to it. There was the morning alarm, (he could no longer ignore those extra minutes), his office phone, the buzzer that connected his office with Warren's (to Harry the most communicative man in history), and, particularly, there was the ringing he felt within himself. It was accom-



panied by a growing pressure that prophesized excitement.

Harry's conscience gave him dark ink-lings as to the cause of his jubilation over his transfer. There was a curious combination of coffee and correspondence in his life, and at this particular stage coffee was in the ascendancy.

"Tell me, do you believe in fate?"

It was lunch hour. Harry sat poised with spoon and cup across from Elizabeth. She studied him roguishly a moment. Then with an air of propriety, she said:

"Mr. Cummings, you have been at your new job scarcely longer than a week. In that time you have constantly offered to buy me coffee, and each time I accept we match, and each time we match I lose. I can no longer believe in fate. You're a crook."

"Look," he pleaded, "You're gimicking up the deal. I don't know where you learned diplomacy, but you certainly keep these coffee conferences bottled-up. Every time I try to lead you into a romantic theme you pull a dodge. What's wrong with my hearts-and flowers routine?"

"I suspect you of being a Bluebeard."

"Bluebeard!" he echoed, "Oh yes, I had a 'steady' in grammar school. Tell me, who's going to shield you from the world, if you don't begin to take nice young men like me serious?"

"Nice young men like you are a woman's world."

"Then, in all fairness, allow me to protect you from me. Do you want me to become disillusioned about man's place in society?"

"Oh, man has an important place in society—protecting himself from himself."

They got up to leave. Harry muttering, "I give up," jammed on his hat.

"What about a movie tonight?"

"No matching?"

"No matching." His face melted into a smile.

\* \* \*

Harry's pressure remained high the first weeks on his new job. Coffee-conferences and dates with Elizabeth kept the bubble in his spirit. In the second week Hardy had forwarded a letter to him from E. J. It had the typical cheeriness of E. J., chiding him for not answering her previous letter, but Harry, caught up in a new scheme of activity, added another good intention to his file and dismissed it from his thoughts. Then a second letter came, short and to the point.

Comrade H. C.—

How does one escape the oppression of her own spirit?

With interest in the cause,

E. J.

This stopped Harry. The following day he sat at his desk staring transfixedly at a sheet of stationery to which he had committed the words, "Comrade E. J." Mentally, he was scribbling other words on it: "... the merry-go-round has stopped, so you have to get off, or Harry doesn't live here anymore." Actually, he weakened. He crumpled the paper and tossed it into the waste basket. Taking another sheet he began afresh.

Dear Edith—

About that long postponed meeting. If I can persuade Warren that he should do his own share of the work, there is a possibility that I might be able to treat you to a ride on the cable cars this week-end. This, of course, is

...

Elizabeth's entrance into his office interrupted him. She put some papers on his desk, and said matter-of-fact-like, "I accept your proposal."

"You do?"

"Yes," and she left his office.

A ninety-second minute passed. Harry bolted through his office door, came to a halt at Elizabeth's desk and, in breathless nonchalance, asked,

"What sort of necromancy do you deal in?"

"It has been quite obvious for some time, Mr. Cummings, that you want to marry me. Now this is a modern world—with the women rapidly outnumbering the men—and a girl has to be practical. So after carefully considering your qualifications, I've decided that you're a safe marital risk."

"Oh." Harry started back to his office. He turned with deliberation.

"Now look, I insist upon my rights. I don't care if this is a modern world. Some things have to be done the old-fashioned way. There's not going to be any clause-ridden contract. There's going to be a genuine, old-fashioned wedding. And I'm coming over tonight to propose the right way or the whole deal's off!"

Back in his office, Harry acted like a man of decision with deliberation he tore up the unfinished letter. With finality he began writing on a new sheet.

\* \* \*

Harry married and his pressure subsided. And he lived happily thereafter—that is until the dark of the honeymoon. It was then that his world began to ring again, and he was bothered by a new and different pressure. He and Elizabeth had bought a modest little house, and Elizabeth had quit work to make it a home for them. All the deficiencies of domesticity that they had known were to be made up, but there were some deficiencies that Harry hadn't been pressed to note. It was these that made him feel pressure of resentment. Now his wife's voice rang in his ears. "... Harry, dear, it would only take a few moments of

your time—a few extra steps . . . must you always put your coat on the back of chairs . . . you'd think the table was a mile away instead of an arms distance since you must always drop the paper on the floor . . . Harry, please come to bed before you fall sound asleep in that chair; it's so hard to wake you . . ."

One evening, Harry decided to have it out. He had studied the problem all day, even during the moments it took him to drive home, so he was prepared when he stepped into the house.

"Before you tell me to hang my coat in the closet or to wipe my shoes, there are some things I want to say." He paused long enough to kiss her lightly, then continued, "I love you, I asked you to marry me, and you did, and that's what I wanted—I think. But I didn't bargain for all your precision and regularity. Everything has to be in order—and you're trying to make an automaton of me! I'm a human being. Human beings are imperfect. And imperfection is disorder. So I want disorder!"

With that he walked over to a chair and with great precision put his coat on the back of it.

"It's my coat and my chair," he continued, "And—" He stopped; that is, he was stopped—by a single little tear that raced across Elizabeth's cheek. And Elizabeth, before he could do any more than raise his arms toward her and grunt, "awe," raced into the bedroom and locked the door.

Harry sat at his desk the next day condemning the perverse tactics of females in the art of argumentation when Warren came in. He tossed some reports on his desk.

"Get these out of the way, today, Harry. I've got to run down to Stockton."

Harry nodded, wondering if Warren would interpret his nod as eager acceptance.



"By the way, how's Elizabeth?"

"Fine. Er—she was a little upset last night, but I think it's only temporary."

"Well, you've got to expect those things. You know—in sickness and in health."

"Yes, I know."

"If it weren't for me, you would never have met her, you know."

"Yes, if it weren't for you."

"Uh—by the way, I'm going to have to get along without you for a week. You're to go back down to Roseville Monday. The supervisor there, Johnson, is going east for a week—family complications of some sort."

Elizabeth wouldn't speak to Harry that evening—even though he hung up his coat. The dinner was one of the best she had ever prepared for him. That it even exceeded the budget Harry noted with that satisfaction peculiar to his temperament. There were other things that caught his masculine eye. Her hair had the look of labored primping, and her dress had not been carelessly chosen. "The world is no place for an unwary male," he thought.

"I'm being sent back to the Roseville office for a week beginning next Monday," he said.

No reply.

"Because the fellow who took my place is going back east for a week—family complications of some sort."

No reply.

"Because it would be senseless to send someone unfamiliar with that office."

No reply.

"Hardy'll be glad to see me . . . He'll probably talk to me." Harry feigned a chuckle. "Used to keep my feet on the desk all the time and never knew him to say one word about it."

"Why didn't you marry him then?!" There was fire in Elizabeth's breath, and

Harry felt the heat of it even after the bedroom door slammed.

\* \* \*

Roseville hadn't changed, Harry noted. The streets still walked the same. The night still squeezed in about the glow of its lights. The air of unhurried ambition still clung there. Harry liked that. Perhaps, he thought, that was why he liked his correspondence with E. J. "There was promise but no hurry."

E. J. and Roseville became somewhat synonymous in Harry's thoughts. Elizabeth's irate manner shadowed his disposition but thoughts of E. J. persisted. Finally he relented.

Dear E. J.—

Once upon a marriage ago I had a pen friend. She was my fairy-godmother and she gave me a golden coach to ride about in. One day I got out of the coach to go to a ball. When I returned it was gone. Can you help me find my coach?

H. C.

No answer came. Twice a day for the rest of the week, Hardy submitted patiently to Harry's questions about the mail, but no answer came. Harry began to feel a little relieved that E. J. did ignore his letter. It was his old impulsiveness again. He would have to guard against it more. Actually there was a tinge of guilt on his conscience because of Elizabeth.

On Saturday Harry packed absent-mindedly. His leave-taking, this time, was anticipated with something less than jubilation. He wanted to see Elizabeth, but the prospect of her continued silence did not please him. His time would have been better spent, he thought, dwelling more on winning her over than wondering about E. J. The reality of the one was too harsh for the soft romanticness of the other.

"Mr. Johnson hasn't returned yet, Mr. Cummings." Hardy brought Harry's attention to the fact that the man he had relieved was not back to take over his job.

"Put a call through to Warren. I'll talk to him about it."

Hardy turned to do as bidden but Harry interrupted him.

"Incidentally, Hardy, what slows a man down?" An air of despair made his words drawn.

"Slows a man down?"

"Yea, you buy a new car and in a few weeks time it's like last year's socks. What happens to the luster?"

"The luster?"

"What happens to the hunter after he bags his game?"

Hardy's awareness caught up with his puzzlement.

"He probably goes after new game."

"But he can't do that indefinitely. He's got to stop somewhere."

"Perhaps the fact that he has to stop is what slows him down."

"Hardy," Harry scowled, "You're a fiend."

The call to Warren came through and Harry relieved the monotony of it with intermittent "yeses" as Warren instructed him to stay at Roseville. To Hardy's expectant look, Harry explained.

"In essence, that monologue means that I stay here until further notice, probably Monday. But, besides that, it means that something's on the fire and 'Mother' Warren is tending it very carefully. Better put a call through to my wife. I'll have to tell her about the change."

To Harry's surprise Elizabeth talked to him—quite civilly. In that unapproachable, feminine manner she carried off the conversation as though nothing had happened between them. She seemed disappointed but not unduly upset about the unexpected

change. Absence did it, Harry thought. Then he, too, was disappointed.

"I got it," he exclaimed.

"Beg pardon?" Hardy looked up.

"The luster. It depends upon the point of view. You've got to look at the thing in the light, and you've got to keep it polished. Which means it takes study and work."

"Mr. Cummings," Hardy said dryly, "with such thinking, you're apt to become ill lustrously."

\* \* \*

"Monday," Harry said aloud to himself. He looked in his bathroom mirror, stroked his bewhiskered chin, and said, "Monday" aloud again as the sound of his previous utterance faded. Over the week-end Elizabeth had dominated his thoughts and he was pleased. Inconspicuous things that had happened during their courtship and on their honeymoon had scurried in and out of his memory. She was over her anger. He desired to see her and, today, Monday, he could pack his things again and start home—he hoped.

It was late when Harry bounced into the office.

"What's in the mail, Hardy?" There was habit, not interest, in his question.

"A letter for you from San Francisco," Hardy permitted himself a raised eyebrow.

Sinking in his chair, Harry seemed to read the letter through the envelope, "It's a child's game," he thought, "teeter-totter—one end's down, the other's up. So! What's up now?" He opened the letter.

Dear Harry—

I consulted an expert on golden coaches. Lost ones can never be found. I could give you another, though it would only be a substitute. Does my offer interest you?

E. J.



"Why can't I run out of ink." Harry thought.

Hardy poked his head through the door.

"Mr. Johnson's here." Johnson followed Hardy into the office.

Harry greeted him. "The whole place is yours."

"Well, I've just come to get my things." Johnson replied.

"Your things?"

"Yea, I'm being transferred to Sacramento."

Harry turned to Hardy. "That's what Warren was stewing about. I suppose that mean's I'll be stuck here again."

"Mr. Cummings," Hardy said, "There's something else. Mr. Warren called and he's coming right over."

"Is Warren in town?"

"Yes. He called from a restaurant."

"What's the scoop, Johnson?" Harry asked.

"It's beyond me. I came in straight from Frisco and all I know about is my own transfer."

"Mr. Cummings," Hardy interrupted, "There's another thing. Mr. Warren is bringing Mrs. Cummings with him."

The wait was short. Warren came breezing in with Elizabeth in tow.

"Harry, my boy. I haven't much time. I've got to reach Grass Valley and start back to Frisco before night. There are some files here that I'll need . . ."

Harry kissed Elizabeth and melted a little while Warren, sifting through the contents of the filing cabinet, talked on. In effect, Warren was appointed to the head offices at San Francisco, Harry to Warren's job at Sacramento, and the Roseville office would be closed. Harry was to do the clean-up work.

After Warren and Johnson had departed, the fury of activity abated and the dust in the office began to settle again. Harry

called Hardy in, told him there would be a job for him at Sacramento, and gave him the rest of the day off.

Then he turned to Elizabeth.

"Mrs. Cummings, would you like to give the office boy a hand?"

"Gladly," she replied, "If the boy can tell me when the company began to handle orders for golden coaches."

She held E. J.'s letter.

"Uh, that's a letter," Harry stammered.

"The perfect excuse," she snapped.

"Please Honey," he pleaded, "I'm tired of fighting. That letter isn't anything. It's part of my growing pains."

"If the letter isn't anything, then neither is your marriage. You can't have contempt for one and not the other."

"But that was before I married you. It was a silly thing."

"How silly. Silly enough to start it again after we were married?"

"Look, I'll tell you all about it. She's a piece of paper—a piece of paper with cute words. That's all I know about her. Before you came along she was an ideal, I had, talking back to me. When we had our trouble I wrote her and she answered. She gave me the right answer, too. She could only give me a substitute—something phony, unreal. So she means nothing to me. She's just E. J.—that's all. She . . ."

Harry's face lit up like a new born genius.

"Of all the sleigh rides in history, Harry, you've had it!"

He grabbed Elizabeth by the shoulders and stared at her long, until both broke into laughter.

"I might have known," he said, "It was all so easy—the meeting, the marriage, and you knowing E. J. was a she. Mrs. Cummings . . . I love you!"

# De Assumptione Mariae

JOSEPH JAKUBIAK

ASSUMPTIONEM Mariae Virginis dogma esse Catholicae fidei festo Sanctorum Omnium anno MCML Papa Pius XII edixit. Non ille novam doctrinam pronuntiavit, sed modo antiquam per revelationem divinam perlatam atque veram esse declaravit.

Fama prima hujus proclamationis in "Observatore Romano" die undevicesimo ante Kalendas Septembres anno MCML scripta est; quae postero die in multis et magnis actis publicis orbis terrarum iterata est.

Causae proclamationis edicendae diversae erant; e quibus aliae quippe erant ad Mariam colendam, aliae ad privilegia illius in medium magis proferenda. Maxima autem causa erat orationes cupiditatesque multae innumerabilium Catholicorum ex tempore Concilii Vaticani, quod octoginta ante annis convocatum erat, Papam implorantium ut Assumptionem dogma esse ediceret. Episcoporum petitiones gravissimae Summo Pontifici erant. Ad quos Papa Pius XII litteras misit quaerens sententias duas: primum, num doctrina Assumptionis dogma esse edici posset; deinde, num illi putarent talem declarationem edicendam esse. Omnes fere id faciendum responderunt. Praeterea omnes ferme Congregationes Religiosae orbis terrarum, principes theologi multarum academiarum, seminariorum, aliarum societatum quoque declararunt doctrinam edicendam esse.

Nihil de ipsa Mariae Assumptione nobis Sacra Scriptura continet. In ea autem scriptum est Mariam esse Matrem Dei; a quo Mariam sine labe originali conceptam neque corruptioni corporis subjectam esse colligere possumus. Hinc sicut Christus a mortuis resurrexit et in caelum ascendit ita etiam Maria, particeps redemptionis

mundi, a mortuis Dei potestate surrexit et una cum corpore animae in caelum assumpta est. Nonne veri simillimum est Deum corpus quod filium suum pepererat conservaturum fuisse?

Traditio gravis est ad veritatem hujus doctrinae probandam. Jam anno sexcentesimo post Christum natum celebratum est festum Mariae Assumptionis. Duo scriptores prisci — Sanctus Joannes Damascenus et Sanctus Andreas Cretensis — religionis Christianae hanc doctrinam jam illo tempore antiquam designant. Magna cum fiducia plerique quoque scholasticorum Medii Aevi doctrinam ab omnibus acceptam esse docebant. Pauci tum vero fuerunt ac hodie sunt qui illam doctrinam clarissimam negabant.

Ecclesiae autem a Deo mandatum est ut omnia vera revelata doceret; aliquo tempore igitur si Ecclesia sentiat aliquam doctrinam revelationem divinam esse, Papa illa doctrina declaranda tantum officio suo fungatur. Ita factum est de Assumptione. Haec proclamatio doctrinam sine errato esse auxilio Spiritus Sancti certum constituit.

Praeteritis temporibus multae doctrinae Catholicae Ecclesiae edictae sunt quia vehemens earum negatio orta erat et rapide crescere incepit. De Mariae autem Assumptione haec necessitas numquam aderat. Omnes credebant Mariam in caelum assumptam esse; doctrina autem numquam edicta erat.

Petitio prima ad doctrinam declarandam a Regina Hispaniensi Isabella Secunda anno MDCCCLXIII ad Papam Pium IX facta est. Papa autem respondit tempus maturum non esse.



Nostrum autem tempus, non quod haec doctrina singularis, sed quod totum Religionis Catholicae fundamentum negatur, opportunum erat. Quotiescumque enim Ecclesia, et omnia quae significat, in extrema periculorum destructionisque pervenit, Christiani omnes ad Matrem Dei confugiunt. Cui enim est majoris curae quam Mariae felicitas eorum qui participes corporis mystici Christi sunt et propter quos Jesus corpori servi pauperis subjectus erat et in cruce crucifixus erat? Ita, cum Saraceni omnem Europam occupaturi esse viderentur, Pius V omnes hortatus est rosario auxilium Mariae petere; quam ob rem Saraceni proelio Laupacti postremo anno MDLXXI victi sunt. Propter quod Pius V festum Sacratissimi Rosarii instituit.

Jam rursus nostro tempore periculum multo majus adest. Quod periculum efficiunt ii qui se magis quam Deum amant, qui avari, superbi, impii erga Deum, ingrati, nefarii, sine pace, pertinaces sunt. Et patientiam Dei ad terminum esse apparet et iram in nos descensuram esse. Iterum igitur nobis ad Matrem Dei eundum est quae refugium solum hodie stat. Ea ipsa dixit se nobis pacem effecturam esse si nuntium suum Fatimae dictum conficeremus.

Opportunissima igitur hoc tempore doc-

trinae proclamatio erat Assumptionis Mariae Virginis. Fidem in Mariam proclamatio restituit quae nos a malo liberare potest.

Magni momenti etiam singulis nostrum Assumptionis doctrina est. Nam cum Maria a Christo in cruce Sancto Joanni mater data est, simul nostra mater facta est. Quod ergo matrem nostram in caelum assumptam esse edictum est, laetari igitur maxime debemus. Maria sicut pons a nobis ad Christum tendens est. Filium Dei amare nisi et Matrem Ejus non possumus. Quanto Mariam veremur tanto magis Deum honoramus. Gratiae omnes quas a Deo accipimus semper in nos per Mariam veniunt.

Hodie, praeterea, corpus humanum a multis habetur aliquid esse quod omnino extinguatur. Proclamatio autem Mariae Assumptionis resurrectionem corporum nostrorum ipsorum, sortem aeternam cujusque corporis humani significat. Olim certe corpora nostra gloriosa surgent et in caelum assumuntur ut cum Jesu et Maria in aeternum jungantur.

Fidem magnam igitur in Mariam sustineamus; rebus adversis nobis auxilium feret; per eam, Januam Caeli, in paradysum postremo intrabimus. O Virgo assumpta in caelum, ora pro nobis!

## Silence

*Hear the screaming voice of silence?*

*Hear the echo of its violence?*

*How odd.*

*How odd.*

*Who says there is no God?*

FRANK PAVALKO

# The Kings of the Earth

*Earth turned slowly, while 'round her a fog—  
In color composed of curving streaks  
Of green and grey—lay like a strange fungus,  
Shutting out light from its dark-fed roots.*

*Beneath the fog, tragic men with souls  
Bloodied by wounds both suffered and given  
Groped in the darkness, engaged in endless fight.  
Then the womb of the world began to strain.*

*Hastened by the vital yearnings of men,  
Catalysed by approaching disaster,  
The birth-muscles writhed in spasmodic heaves  
'Till, from the pain-purged womb, came forth two kings.*

*The first was robed in flashing sapphire  
Scarce brighter than his face—he bore the name:  
King Theos; the second, clad in a splendor  
Of jet-black gems, was called King Atheos.*

*Blood-bound by birth, yet born in battlegrasp,  
They stood in arbitration—King Theos spoke:  
"Take us our troops to opposite poles  
For then may my power bisect the world."*

*Atheos, ebon-eyed, mused over the words;  
At length, in powerfully sombre voice,  
Replied, "There is no other outlet, else  
"In the end we shall destroy each other."*

*"So be it," spoke King Theos; then each called  
His corps; King Theos moved in mighty act—  
In mightier cataclysm, the earth-crust  
Trembled—cracked, crumbled, then broke open.*

*Two half-worlds floated in opposite orbs;  
In the kingdom of Theos a mystic light  
Sparkling from his radiant sapphire robe  
Lanced at the fog, driving it from his land.*

*Theos stood gazing in a golden tower,  
As the fog crept hideously through space  
Coiling 'round Atheos' kingdom, pressing,  
Crushing, 'til at last there remained—nothing.*

DAVID COADY



# The Return

DONALD CLARK

## Characters:

Father

Mother

Daughter

Son

Large Elm

Three Smaller Elms

The Wind

A dog

*[The curtain parts revealing the stage set with a large, thick, full elm down-stage left. Another tree is left-center, middle stage; a third, right center, middle stage; and the last is down-stage, right. These last three are smaller than the large elm whose bulk commands the stage left and whose branches arch nearly to the stage right-center. It can be discerned that the four trees are somewhere near the outer edge of a deep forest. The time is mid-afternoon and the sunlight pours into the little clearing; as the play progresses the time does also and the shadows deepen into the evening's early dusk. The hinted outlines of a face is in the bark of each tree.]*

*A family has just completed its picnic here, and the mother is putting things away in preparation to leave. The father is found lying against the large elm, hands behind his head, gazing dreamily up into the branches. The two children play a game of ball while the family dog sleeps by the baby's cradle. The wife notices her husband's dreamy expression.]*

Mother: What is up there, Jim?

Father: *[still gazing up]* Oh, nothing much, Mary. Just a lot of dreams.

Mother: They're your dreams, I'm sure. *[moving closer]* May I share them?

Father: No. There is one thing I can't share with you or myself. All those dreams were buried long ago by a little, dirty-faced kid. And I'm afraid the chest of treasures and adventures can only be opened by the hand of another dirty-faced boy. As you grow, you lose the keys, one by one.

Mother: *[reprovingly]* Now don't tell me, Jim, you buried an old chest around here.

Father: *[chuckling to himself]* No, Mary, no. You see, when I was a little boy, my folks owned a farm near here, and often I used to wander through this forest and play. One day I found **this tree**. It was the biggest and most noble tree in the whole forest—and I suppose it still is. It became my castle, and I became its undisputed lord. Here I fought great battles, slew dragons, and

captured Indians. Often I sat high in its branches, the wind whirling about me, and with this whole tree as my ship I sailed the seven seas of boyland adventure. I did all kinds of great and heroic acts; avenging wrongs, conquering evil. [*musings*] How soon we forget. [*growing bitter*] Look at it all now.

Mother: [*quickly*] Please, dear, just for the afternoon relax, forget the world and its troubles. It's not your fault. There's always been talk of war. We won't have to worry.

Father: [*still depressed*] Oh, it's not only the tension of a fragile peace, but . . . well, I don't know, we're not the same race as we used to be. All boys have the dreams I had, but once they're grown they forget. I've almost forgotten myself. They become more like animals. [*almost to himself*] I don't know why; I don't know why. Look at us; ten years of building war machines. [*urgently*] Mary!

Mother: Yes, dear.

Father: If something should happen, anything. You know . . .

Mother: Yes, Jim, I know.

Father: We'll meet here. Here by this tree. Somehow I feel we've got a friend in the earth and trees and sky. They're friends you seldom meet, but, when you do, they make you feel kind of good all over again.

Mother: I understand, Jim.

Daughter: [*about six; running to her father*] Daddy, daddy! Do the trees talk?

Father: Why do you ask that, Jane?

Daughter: Because Bobby said you said they did.

Father: [*gathering his daughter into his arms*] As a little boy I used to sit and listen to the trees talk to one another.

Daughter: What did they say, daddy?

Father: I never really knew their language, but I'll wager if anyone would listen *real* hard he could hear and understand what the trees whisper to one another.

Daughter: Can I hear, daddy; can I hear?

Father: With everyone around they won't say much. But you come out all by yourself some day, sit very still, and you'll hear them, I promise you.

Son: [*about four*] Me, daddy, I want to hear too.

Father: It's too late today. We'll come out again soon and spend the whole day just listening. All right?



Children: Oh, yes daddy!

Father: Pick up your toys now and help Mommy. It's late and we have to go. [*They start to leave*]

Father: Mary, what if I could get a little piece of land. Just an acre or so to start with . . .

[*The door of an automobile is heard to open not far off stage. Little Jane runs back on stage and picks up a doll she has forgotten. She looks at the big trees about her and listens intently. The mother's voice is heard calling, "Jane, Jane!" The little girl scampers off. The car door slams and the automobile is heard driving off.*]

A long pause follows. Softly, so very softly, a whispering sound begins. The whispers increase in intensity but not in intelligibility. The smaller trees sway slightly as if they were turning conversation amongst themselves.]

Large Elm: Here, there, speak up!

Elm: [*shaking his branches a bit*] Here, there, I said speak up! [*The three trees give up excited whispers.*]

Middle tree: [*timidly*] We're . . . we're sorry, Father Elm, for waking you.

Elm: Ahem. I wasn't sleeping, children. Day dreaming a bit maybe. But that confounded whispering you do annoys me so. In a high breeze it's the same; you mumble while I roar. Speak up. Speak up!

Right Tree: [*to the others*] The real reason is that Father Elm can't hear well. [*They titter among themselves.*]

Middle tree: Tell us, Father Elm, did you hear the humans when they were here?

Elm: It was that young man who set me dreaming.

Left tree: Do you remember him?

Elm: How could I forget him; humans and their dogs, Bah! When he was younger he had a brown and white little beast who used to nibble at me, too.

Middle tree: Did he actually climb up to the top of you, as he said?

Elm: He certainly did!

Trees: How humiliating!

Elm: Nothing of the sort. I became rather fond of him, his soft pudgy fingers and his hard little boots. I'm sure he wore out three suits of clothing climbing around me; he was worse than a squirrel. Look [*shaking a limb*]. He carved his initials up here.

Trees: [*horrified*] Oh, no . . . Poor Father Elm . . . Did you suffer much?

Elm: It didn't hurt a bit. In fact I cherish his little mark. He made it the last time I saw him as a boy.

- Middle tree: Did you see him again before today?
- Elm: Well, no. But the breeze told the trees at the forest's edge to look for him, and should he come, to tell me. Today was his first return. You saw he hadn't forgotten.
- Left tree: Has he changed, Father Elm?
- Elm: I must say he's less neat. West Wind, West Wind, aid me, hear, from 'round me this rubbish clear.  
[*The West Wind comes, making a deep guttural roar, shaking the trees and blowing away the rubbish.*]
- Elm: That's better. My little boy has grown much and older too, and his little boy-heart is sadder. He and all the little boys of his age have grown sad. If they would look back into the forest and earth and sky they would find life filling; we would nourish, protect, and inspire them. But, alas, they surround themselves with walls of rock and roofs of smoke; when they can't see us, they lose our inspiration and truth.
- Middle tree: Is that why they kill each other?
- Elm: Mostly. But more, the ideals they get from us are not for youth only. This note of truth and hope is smothered in the noise of their cities, and destroyed in the clamor of their wave.
- Right Tree: Oh, what terrible beings possess the earth.
- Elm: They are not terrible, child, merely lost. Someday they may return.
- Middle tree: [*hopefully*] Do you think so, wise elm?
- Elm: It is assured; for why else would The Source permit us to grow and flower. We must be ready when they return.
- Left tree: How are we to help them?
- Elm: It is from the earth, the sky, and us that they will build and grow anew. We will be the foundation of their new world, a world in which they will not deny their dreams and youthful ideals. [*It has gradually grown darker, and the Wind has become audible; now it rustles the branches of the four trees.*]
- Right Tree: Father Elm, the wind is calling you.
- Elm: Shush, child, I'm listening. [*The Wind moans a threatening mumble; the sound is like a grumbling cry.*]
- Elm: [*quivering*] Wind, tell me it is not so! [*Wind moans again*] Children, children! Gather yourself together and rush to your deepest roots, man is about to kill himself again!

[*He has just finished his warning when through the edge of the forest, left-rear, afar off, there is a great burst of light, then another, and three more in*



rapid succession. A pause, followed by rumbling waves of sound. The smaller trees shake and toss in the wind that follows on the heel of the sound. Three bursts of light ring the rear of the forest, and can be seen dimly through the trees. As the wind and sound from these explosions pour into the forest clearing, off right one flash, another, and finally a tremendous series of rapid, brilliant illuminations etch the forest in black and white patterns. The light abruptly ceases and the clearing is plunged into pitch darkness. A great rumble and wind are heard sweeping through the forest; the clatter and grinding of timber is pronounced. The noise gradually dies away and a silence empty of any sound returns.

Slowly, so slowly, the hazy gloom of early morning begins (and remains throughout the scene). In the half light, the forest is found with a great number of bare and broken branches, and several old trees have fallen far to the rear. Some branches on the younger trees in the clearing are twisted, while the Elm has one small limb dangling. The ground is covered with a residue of leaves and branches. There is another pause in time sequence here.

Then afar a voice can be heard calling a name. The voice echoes softly in the empty woodland. The call comes several times again, each time nearer. It is a woman's voice calling "Jim." The crunch of leaves can be clearly heard and the Mother stumbles into the clearing (stage right) with the baby in her arms. Her condition bespeaks the horrors of the night: her clothing is blackened and torn; her hair is disheveled; and her face and arms are smeared with dirt. She is at the point of exhaustion. Weakly and hopelessly she calls once again. With great tenderness she places the baby in a small valley made by the ground roots of the two Elm's. She leans against the tree and sits watching the child (they are down stage left). The upper branches of the Elm move slightly.

Another voice is calling from far off, right. The wife doesn't seem to hear the calls until they are nearing the clearing. When she does, her first instinct is fear. She grabs up the baby and presses herself into the crevice of the tree. The father staggers into the clearing, his clothing torn and his body blackened. He carries his little son, who is sleeping, on his shoulder. He calls again and listens.]

Father: Mary! . . . Mary!

Mother: [running out to him] Oh, Jim, Jim darling, it's you.

Father: [holding her] I'm so glad you remembered this place. How are the baby and Jane?

Mother: [startled] Jane? Isn't she with you?

Father: No. Isn't she here?

Mother: [starting to rush off] I must go to the city. I must find her.

Father: [restraining her] There is nothing, Mary. There is nothing left.

Mother: [grasping the little boy, kissing him and crying] Oh, Oh, Oh. But . . . But you're here, Jim. You've returned.

Father: [as Mother weeps in his arms] Yes . . . [looks slowly up into the Elm over him] . . . I've returned.

CURTAIN

# "The Greeks"

DANIEL BOYLAN

SOME TIME AGO a leading Indianapolis newspaper noted the fact that a motion-picture company, 20th Century-Fox, was receiving more letters of protest concerning a forthcoming movie, "Take Care of My Little Girl," than it did even about its controversial and highly publicized films on racial prejudice ("Gentleman's Agreement," "Pinky," "No Way Out"). Since racial prejudice is one of the most delicate and most spotlighted of our national problems, one is prompted to wonder about the subject-matter of "Take Care of My Little Girl" that it should evoke more public protest than the celluloid attempts at White denunciation. If one took the trouble to investigate, he would find that the new movie is a rather humorous and satirical account of sorority life in a co-educational institution of higher learning. Like the book from which it was taken, its humor does not consist entirely of hilarious situations: it is a searching penetration into a way of life that dominates the campus activities of most colleges and universities today. The most noteworthy part of the situation is that "Take Care of My Little Girl" has not as yet been released for general showing in the theaters throughout the nation. What is there then about the fraternity and sorority system that should cause such protestation even before the blow has landed; even before it is known if a blow is coming? Are the Greek-letter societies merely misunderstood, or are they unable to bear close scrutiny from a democratic point of view?

*The Encyclopedia Americana* states: "Greek-letter societies and college fraternities are found in nearly all educational

institutions, particularly the great universities of the United States. Branches of the various societies are known as 'chapters' and are found in nearly every college as well as in every large city in the country. No society has more than one chapter in any one college. While these societies are secret in character there is seldom any over-emphasis of ritual or mystery in their conduct . . ."

This, in part, is the encyclopedia's definition of the campus "Greeks." Obviously, it is merely a superficial explanation that leaves the reader no better informed than before he read it. Actually the fraternity-sorority system is a vast and highly complex organization that has been operating for more than one hundred years on the campuses of American colleges. The individual fraternity or sorority concerns itself with the fraternal, social, academic, and philanthropic development of its members during their college careers. After graduation it binds them into alumni groups that attempt, probably with a lesser degree of success, to help the new graduates to adjust themselves in the world and to keep alive the friendships and ties formed during school years. On the campus the fraternities and sororities succeed admirably. Members have the loyalty of primary groups, even calling themselves fraternity "brothers" and sorority "sisters." Their social prowess requires no testimonial and along academic lines standards are likewise maintained.

Before initiation, a prospective member goes through a trial period known as "pledgeship." The length of this period varies, but is seldom less than a semester.



During this time "pledges" are required to study from two to three hours each night and are ineligible for membership should they fail to achieve a specified scholastic index. Even initiated members can be barred from activities if their index does not remain up to par. Moreover, practically every fraternity or sorority has some pet charitable endeavor, thus encouraging members along philanthropic lines. With few exceptions, each group owns or leases a "house," where the members live, thus providing an atmosphere of "home away from home."

Seemingly, the fraternity-sorority system is the ideal way of going through school, and members say it is the "only way." If this is true, what quarrel does the general public have with these groups? Why should the movies attack them, the unorganized students (students who have not affiliated themselves with a fraternity or sorority) denounce them, the incoming students fear them? Above all, why should the organized students themselves protest so vehemently against a movie depicting their society?

If the public is suspicious of the "Greeks," one need not go far to discover the cause of the trouble. Undoubtedly, it is the rather heartless methods employed in the selection of new pledges and their subsequent initiation. Those not intimately acquainted with fraternities and sororities may claim that the clannish spirit evidenced by the members, both initiated and pledged, is the most prominent evil of the system; those closely akin to the spirit and loyalty of these groups realize that the aforementioned objection is merely incidental.

The methods employed to screen prospective candidates for membership varies considerably from campus to campus. In many of the larger universities, candidates are selected before the school term ever begins, either from new students or from

students who were in attendance the previous year. This method is probably less heartless than the pledge traditions of smaller schools, where it is customary to hold a "rush period." To cite an example, a small Midwestern college holds such a five-day period each fall, with the sororities conducting their "rush" in a different manner than the fraternities. Each sorority member submits a list of names of girls she considers eligible for membership. On each night of "rush week," every sorority conducts a fairly elaborate party. Each group invites all of the girls whose names were submitted to the first party. After the guests have gone, the members discuss them one by one, sitting up till dawn if necessary, and omitting the names of those girls not considered desirable. This process is repeated each night, and any girl whose name is omitted is simply not invited to the next party. To be accepted, the girl must be invited to each party during "rush." The discussion periods are extremely personal, and any small detail of the prospective candidate's life is held up for close scrutiny. To prevent any group from becoming too large, the school assigns a uniform quota to each organization, beyond which quota pledges may not be accepted. Those who survive the entire week are given "bids" or invitations to join. Anyone receiving more than one bid is fortunate indeed.

Less complicated, but equally cold, is the fraternity "rush" system. All the fraternities together sponsor a large get-together called a "smoker." All members are present, but prospective candidates attend only by invitation from the Inter-Fraternity Council. From those invited, the fraternities choose the students whom they, in turn, ask to attend their *private* "smokers." These students are carefully analyzed after the private "smoker," and the pledge list is drawn up from those whose names are



not deleted for undesirability. In the next step. However, the fraternities tend to heartlessness more than the sororities. Whereas the girls receive their bids privately and in a sealed envelope, the boys are notified orally wherever they happen to be when a fraternity officer sees them. For example, two boys who attended the same "smoker" may be sitting in the school "hang-out," possibly with some girls, and undoubtedly discussing their chances of being selected: A fraternity officer may approach their table and announce to *one* of the boys, "You're invited to our first pledge meeting Tuesday night." His careful avoidance of the unselected boy is obvious to all. Incidents such as these have ignited the bitterness of many a radical "Independent." In addition, the weeks preceding "rush" are tedious ones in which everyone hopes and wonders whether he or she will be "pledged." The disappointment of being refused after all the tension of the foregoing weeks has caused more than one student to leave school, to become bitter, or, in very isolated cases, to resort to violence.

These screening methods may sound extreme, but even so, fraternity and sorority members believe they are necessary in order to obtain the most desirable candidates. They believe that less careful screening would permit the admission of students who might later bring disgrace to their group or cause it to lose prestige. This is very, very true. It is deplorable to see a fraternity or sorority remain a campus leader for years, only to drop from prominence almost overnight because it admitted pledges whose lack of personality or school spirit forced the organization to take a back seat in campus affairs—or whose moral standards gave the group a bad reputation. Since most organizations are obliged to take a certain number of legacies (sons, daugh-

ters, or relatives of alumni or of prominent faculty members) each year, they must be doubly careful concerning those whom they select themselves.

The other principal point of objection to the "Greeks" is their system of initiation. This is known as "hell week" and is very well named except for the fact that it seldom lasts a week and in some places is as short as forty-eight hours. In past years, "hell week" frequently has been characterized by brutality, sadism, and property-destruction. This last phase of "hell week" is being brought under control by school authorities, who forbid this portion of the initiation. One large university confines "hell week" activities to the fraternity or sorority houses. But the first two phases of "hell week"—brutality and sadism—regrettably still remain at least to some degree. Fraternities and sororities, however, consider the behavior of the candidate during the pledge period and "hell week" a fairly accurate measure of his true personality. They believe that students who are too "soft," too narrow-minded, or too "hot-tempered," cannot survive pledgship and "hell week." They are also convinced, and no doubt rightly so, that the mutual ordeal binds the pledge class into close ties of friendship, understanding and common experience that will not soon be broken.

Such is the case for and against the "Greeks." Are they too harsh, too discriminatory, too heartless, too undemocratic? Or is their membership a privilege not to be passed out freely? Those who call the names, who bring the charges, who throw the stones are seldom members and are quite possibly motivated by jealousy or disappointment. It is from the irrational desire for revenge of a few emotionally immature rejectees, that sororities and fraternities have the most to fear. The denunciations of such people often place the



groups in a false, damaging light, swaying public opinion against them. Consequently, without even knowing the exact treatment they will receive from the previously mentioned movie, fraternity and sorority members have protested vehemently lest such ideas be promulgated through such a powerful medium as the motion picture. Being

human institutions, sororities and fraternities are far from perfect, but they are constantly at work to improve themselves. As accepted campus residents of long standing, they have proved their worth. Despite their faults, they should not become prey to every disgruntled hopeful who couldn't pass their tests.

## Colleagues of Storm

*Black clouds hovered over half-hushed sky,  
While flush-faced Apollo slipped westward to die.  
Then the sounding, bounding wind entered in  
With the gloom of its doom and the din.*

*Pregnant nebulae were gathering near,  
Shawling themselves with moist atmosphere.  
Then the moaning, groaning gust swooped past  
With a burst and the echo of its blast.*

*Lightning thwacked its fingered expanse,  
Flashing with brightness its flaming advance.  
Then the slashing, plashing streak-like flare,  
Shattered the ceiling of the mansion of air.*

*Tiny sons of torment in a showering train,  
Wove a windy wardrobe over Adam's domain.  
And the wailing, failing bough-backed trees  
(Swaying in tempo to the tyrant's decrees)  
Propped up the heavens with leaf-decked hand,  
While bits of liquid shrapnel were strafing the land.*

LEO MATUSICKY

# *The End of the Eclipse*

JOHN BASSETT

CHOIR PRACTICE was over and the choir members began leaving church in the usual hurry which church attendance seems to precipitate. It had been unseasonably hot this evening and the extra long session which Father McGuire demanded had combined throughout the evening with the oppressive atmosphere to put comfort at a premium. As groups of two and three descended the narrow stairway, the general topic, when the good choirmaster was out of hearing range, was the perfection Father McGuire sought after and the large quantity of work he inflicted on his choir to achieve this perfection. For ordinary Sunday performance at the festive ten o'clock High Mass, his twice weekly practice sessions seemed, if not oppressive, at least extraordinarily diligent. Now, with Easter just around the corner and the attendance requirements hiked to four evening gatherings, the added two being set aside solely for Easter hymns and chants, the Christian fortitude of Cathedral's faithful vocalists was becoming a bit thin in spots.

Arthur Rollins brushed past the little group that was immediately in front of him and hastened toward the open door, where the beckoning night air stood hesitantly, only daring to enter now and then for a brief stay in the vestibule.

—It's good to get out where you aren't cramped, he reflected as he stepped onto the sidewalk.

"Good-night, Arthur," flitted across his mind and was gone. He turned and looked back but no one was there.

--Guess those people I passed spoke to me. Probably laughing right now, or else calling me a conceited snob for not speak-

ing to them. Who . . . oh, it was Bill Fletcher and that big, fat Irish friend of his, Timothy Gor . . . nothing but a loud mouth pair anyway . . . always trying to make people look like fools . . . like all the rest of the scum that live in this city . . . no good, but not satisfied to stay that way alone . . . subtly ensnaring me, they think, but I've got them outfoxed. Today they speak amicably but tomorrow they don't see you. That Fletcher's the sly one . . . likes to toss compliments around like a damnable pharisee . . . told me what a good singer he thought I was the day McGuire gave him the Easter solo . . . thought he'd save my feelings, so he'd be on my good side . . . he needn't have bothered. I don't need his help or sentiments. He and McGuire and the rest of them mean nothing . . . nothing at all!

It was a good five-minute walk to the bus stop, and Arthur Rollins was in no mood to prolong this time by any dallying. As he hurried on his way, his forward bent figure appeared slight in the enveloping dusk. As a matter of fact, he was a small man, thin but not too thin for his height. He was that type of little man who at once appears to have strength and solidity beyond that expected of him. An air of authority and respect surrounded him. His hazel eyes formed a blended background for his well-formed and handsome face which was now, however, beginning to become a bit lined and wrinkled with age. The perennial furrows in his forehead combined with the age-produced lines to put his excellent Roman nose in inverted parentheses.

Having reached his destination, by coincidence, at the same time that the bus arrived, Arthur boarded it and settled back



in a side seat for the fifteen, or seventeen, or twenty minutes it would take to get home. The bus company, Arthur mused as he adjusted himself in his seat, declared infallibly that it was a fifteen minute ride at those times when it was deemed necessary to advertise or when the ICC, on one of those rare and ineffectual occasions, called it to task. Generally, though, an addition of three or five minutes to the declared time would yield the arrival date of the bus. These bus companies were just like all the other money-grasping concerns operating under the guise of service organizations. Anything to save or make a buck, including outmoded buses, concerning which there were nothing but the well-worn promises for a whole new fleet in the future, when "present exigencies subside."

Pondering these inadequacies, along with the complete stupidity of the human race, Arthur alighted at his corner and hastened toward home. It was now quite dark. The street lights, beaming in self-appointed majesty, created for him at frequent intervals grotesque characters of the night, slithering in and around the closely-spaced residences. A slight wind was blowing, shaping and reshaping the night creatures to its delight, in addition to performing a sudden cooling function.

A small light on the second floor showed Arthur that his mother had not yet gone to bed. She was probably lying awake worrying about how long it had been since he left for choir practice and what possibly could have happened to him, and so on *ad infinitum*. He wondered if all mothers were that way. For as long as he could remember, his mother had worried about him, nagged him, frustrated him, and, in a word, dominated his life. Here he was pushing forty and she still persisted. How old does a man have to be before he outgrows these things and is allowed freedom to go and do

as he pleases? If only he could have remained with the Society, then he would have freedom. But—

"Back so soon, Dear?" Mrs. Rollins queried as Arthur reached the top of the stairs. She had a low, matronly voice, which cracked once as she spoke but still seemed to possess a peculiarly gentle yet stern tone.

—Back so soon, indeed. You needn't act so surprised, as if you hadn't been waiting up an hour already in mortal fear that I should run off and leave you. How credulous does she think I am? A college degree, eight years study for the Society, plus God knows how many years in the laboratory at Midwest Tractor, and she still persists in treating me as an irresponsible adolescent.

"Yes, I'm back." As he entered his mother's spacious bedroom, a shot of electricity ran the course of his backbone. It was always this way when he entered the room. There, in the far corner, stood the high, antique double bed, occupied more or less constantly by his mother since arthritis had conquered her six years ago. Adorning the yellowed walls were a few evenly-spaced paintings, depicting outstanding phases in the life of Christ, while opposite the bed was a rare portrait of the Blessed Mother holding the Child Jesus. The mantel piece held an abundant supply of family photographs, with Arthur's late father dominating the array from the center position.

"How was Father McGuire this evening, Arthur?"

"All right."

—Why should I tell her more? Why point out that he deliberately belittles me before those people, relegates me to the position of a common singer because I didn't make ordination? He's so high and mighty with his liturgical knowledge and his fine priestly mannerisms. Always finding fault with the Society. "Jeh-bees" he likes to call them. Well, they know more liturgy—anything for



that matter—than he'll ever hear of. She'd never believe that, though. Tell her these things and, with motherly prudence, she'd quietly tell me how wrong I was and that I was just imagining all these things. What does she know of the Society? Only what she's read and I wrote to her. You'd think she'd pay some attention to me instead of always sticking up for the other people and belittling me in her subtle fashion.

"Mr. Roscow called this evening. He asked if you would work tomorrow. I told him I thought you were pretty tired from working overtime the past few weeks and that you would probably want to rest tomorrow. Of course, it's up to you, dear, but I really think you've been overtaxing yourself lately."

—There she is again, trying to run my life. Only this time she's actually jeopardizing my position at the plant. What'll Roscow think if I'm too tired to go to work? He'll really push now, until he has me out of the lab and into the plant itself.

Arthur gazed away from his mother and cursorily ran his eyes over the room. He was seized with an overwhelming sense of revulsion. The furniture and furnishings had not altered materially since his childhood but the whole atmosphere was now radically different. The prim, neatly-arranged dresser to his right now mocked fiendishly at him, while the oval, full length mirror below the portrait spat derision at his attire. Edging in from every angle, the entire room seemed massed in a general conspiracy to engulf his being and bury him in anonymity. He must get away. He must escape this room as he must escape everyone.

"I think I'll go to bed."

Without hesitating for an answer, he walked the short distance down the hallway to his room, slammed the door, and, without undressing, extended himself on

his disheveled bed. He lay there panting for a moment, his mind a confused whirl of objects, laughter, and thousands upon thousands of words. Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, English words. Word sounds, word images, long sentences, fragments, phrases, isolated quotations from a selection of long, long ago. "*Arma virumque Cano Trojae qui primis arboris . . .*" The words lingered in his mind's eye, as familiar to him as any ordinary conversation piece. Darting, fading, now blurred, and then clear as if viewed on the written page. How real they seemed!

Now he was in his bleak room at the Seminary, poring over the tricky Latin hexameter, striving to transform it into its English counterpart. "*Italiam fato profugus Laviniaque venit . . .*" on and on flowed Vergil's facile style and beautifully chosen words. He had spent every spare moment possible working, cutting, twisting these words until their essential meaning and form had come forth into English free verse. The task had been arduous. There was no time for recreation. No golf or tennis, games which he had loved in his younger days. Only the incessant labor. But it was worth it, for when he was finished he would have his masterpiece; would take a back seat to none of the intelligentsia, with all their titles and lists of published works.

It had been three, four, five years — exactly how long he couldn't remember — since he first began working on the *Aeneid*. Anyway, as he swung into the final phase of his work, they began to notice him, began to inquire into the state of his health and to put forth other like civilities. At first, their concern was not so obvious. Then, as he came nearer and nearer the completion of his work, as the days swept into oblivion and fatigue began gaining the upper hand in the struggle, he noticed their growing interest in his activities. They had



learned what he was doing! On and on he had worked, fighting against time, stopping only for meals, classes, and the minimum of sleep. All went well until the day he awoke in the infirmary, his head splitting, his mind hazy, and his whole body limp and terribly weak. From that day on, they came and went, were extra kind and gentle. That day began the persecution, the intermingled pity and fear which he had been subject to the rest of his life.

Six months he had convalesced, but they had seen no improvement and had let him go. Had let him go! On the virtual summit of his success, he had been cast adrift by the horrors of a nervous breakdown. Upon his arrival at home, he had met life full in the face, without benefit of color or guise. The impossibility of readjusting oneself to everyday living at thirty-two after eight years of virtual seclusion almost staggered him. There was nothing he was specially qualified to do, and jobs were hard to get in those days even for the skilled. Coupled with his inability to find an occupation was the constant pity and reserve with which he was treated at home. And the humdrum of everyday existence was accentuated by the utter lack of a place for him in society. There was nothing for him to do but exist, no object in life anymore, no one to be with or talk with.

Then he had obtained his position as a chemical analyst in the laboratories at the Midwest Tractor Co., a job in which he could use the training of his college days. He'd been diligent, had progressed and done well until a short while back when Roscow and the other big shots began demanding more and more work and, consequently, less and less individual freedom. Like all the other people, they were becoming jealous of his abilities, were going to clamp down on him and pack him in with the rest of the herd.

It was well past midnight when Arthur sat up and took his bearings. He drank in the utter hopelessness and hollowness poured out by his darkened room and found the concoction acting as arsenic in his system. The bareness, the blackness, the complete lack of purpose in his life swayed over him. No night was so black as his existence, no cavern so empty. Forty years he had lived without accomplishing a thing, without a purpose except for those few blessed years of labor in the distant past.

Gazing outside through his high, curtained window, Arthur saw large, billowing black clouds proceeding from different directions to meet and obliterate the moon. The slight wind had mounted to a roar and seemed to anticipate a clash between the madly on-rushing clouds. All was uproar. And what for? Nothing, nothing at all, Arthur thought. That's how life is. A constant uproar, out of which comes nothing but eventual annihilation of everything one holds dear and sacred. Any thought of purpose or reason in life is a joke, he bitterly surmised, despite all Father McGuire and his cohorts would have you believe.

Suddenly Arthur could stand the tension no longer. He walked to the door, slowly opened it and in two short, quick steps was at the head of the stairs. Everything was dark, still dark, and he could hear his mother's peaceful slumber as he began slowly descending the old stairway. With catlike grace, he was down the stairway and into the lower hall. A great calm came over him as he stopped to consider for a moment what he was doing. For the first time in his existence he had a purpose. He would be doing some good for the world as well as for himself; and his exit from the world would be auspicious in fitting testimonial to the life he could have been.

But still cautious, still fearful, lest he should be discovered and thwarted in this

last attempt for freedom, he made his way to the kitchen. There, he knew, along the right hand wall was the silverware drawer. Groping stealthily he found the drawer and opened it instinctively, not daring to use a light. Towards the back of the drawer, he found and grasped tightly the newly sharpened butcher knife.

"It's all so simple, so pitifully simple," Arthur half audibly mumbled. "No one around and I'm without bonds. A quick slash at the jugular vein and I'll escape this miserable existence and be perfectly free! They'll never laugh again, nor torture, nor squeeze. I'll have my final, sweet, everlasting triumph over the filthy pack of them."

He stepped out on to the back porch to grasp this eternal moment in the crispness of the night air. Revolving the knife a few times in his steady hands, he noticed the faint glitter of light it reflected from the barely discernible rays of the moon. His light had been faint in the world also. A perfect ending this would be, Arthur fathomed; two faint rays clashing to produce the shining beacon that was to be his final deed.

Suddenly, however, without warning, without apparent reason, a remarkable thing happened as Arthur Rollins prepared the knife for its thrust. Like the clouds

above him, which had come from nowhere, a strange yet familiar scene of the past pushed itself across his mind. It was the death-bed scene of Jack Simons, his classmate, and definitely the most brilliant of them all. How could Jack be so resigned? How could he iterate so peacefully the words of Simeon the prophet: "*Nune dimittis servum tuum, Domine, secundum verbum tuum in pace . . .*" Why had Jack worked and slaved through his college years—just to die—to die without first giving the world the benefit of his learning? Why it almost sounded like the seemingly ridiculous planting of cabbages upside down of which Rodriquez spoke so emphatically in his spiritual writings. Yet—? He grasped at the picture but it was gone, swallowed up in the increasing turmoil of his brain. He tried again, but now his mind was whirling dizzily and he couldn't think. Once, twice, he instinctively commanded the knife to strike his throat. Again the third time — and he saw it come.

Like the thunder of the drums as the final curtain rings down on a dramatic sequence, Arthur's mind exploded and was swept up and hurtled through black space. But before the curtain had enveloped the stage, he felt in the vast distance a slight thud and knew vaguely that the weapon had not reached its mark.



# Editorials

## The Revival of Measure

Back in 1937, a group of St. Joseph's College students decided that a literary journal was in order. Under the Editorship of Andrew G. Bourdow, '38, ably guided by the Rev. Paul Speckbaugh, *MEASURE* came into being. The name itself was chosen only after much consideration, and the reasons for the choice are aptly given in the first editorial from the first issue, that of Autumn, 1937:

"The name of our new literary journal is *MEASURE*. The word is simple, direct and forceful, and folded within the depths of its denotation are two meanings which are highly appropriate for the publication of a Catholic college.

"A measure is an indication of the capacity, quantity, or degree of something. And, measure signifies a kind of restraint or boundary set to the expression of something."

So, *MEASURE* is intended to give a view of the achievements of St. Joseph's students, and of the way in which these achievements can be verbally expressed. The hope of the staff is that the achievements may be considered scholarly and the mode of expression literary.

Since the current issue is the first since 1948, an explanation of the two-year lapse is due the readers. The answer is found in the shifting of student interest brought about by World War II. With so much emphasis being placed on the physical and social sciences, there came a considerable decrease in the number of students of the Humanities. Since this field includes writing and journalism, there were few who wished to write, and thus *MEASURE* could not be published.

The current issue is somewhat of an experimental one, in view of the present times, for the coming of general conscription may again make the publication of this magazine unfeasible. This issue is the result of renewed interest in creative writing on the campus. As in the past, the policy of *MEASURE* will be to represent as many departments of the college as possible, in the best style possible.

## The College Shield

The coat-of-arms, or shield, displayed on the title page of this issue, is the official one of St. Joseph's College. Most readers, if observant, will remember this shield as the center of the college seal, wherein it is surrounded by a border and the words *Religio*, *Moralitas*, and *Scientia*. Back in the days of the Crusades, the use of coat-of-arms came into existence as a means of identification. So too, at present, is the college shield a means of identification.

It is much more besides. It is a rich study in symbolism, presenting the major influences on the lives of those who live under this banner.

But before a full explanation of the shield can be given, it is necessary to

explain the method of representing colors in black-and-white printing. The following scheme is used, according to the rules of heraldry:

Argent signifies silver and is left quite plain. Azure is represented by lines drawn from the dexter (right) to the sinister (left) side of the shield parallel to the chief. Sanguine (red) is represented by diagonal lines crossing each other.

Following this color scheme, it is seen that the St. Joseph's coat-of-arms is on an azure "field" charged with three silver fleur-de-lis and a carpenter's square. The color blue itself is that of the Blessed Virgin and represents the special dedication to her of the communities of the Society of the Precious Blood. Reminders of St. Joseph, patron of the college, are found in the three lilies, symbols of his purity, and in the carpenter's square, the token of work and perseverance.

The shield is edged by a "bordure" of silver charged with eight drops of blood; these, of course, standing for the Society of the Precious Blood, guardian of the college. When a bordure is charged with small figures, the number eight is used according to heraldic convention.

If this shield is to be a true means of identification, men of St. Joseph's College must endeavor to foster within themselves a more vivid consciousness and appreciation of the major influences surrounding their educational experience: the Redemptive Blood of Christ, His Blessed Mother, and the beloved guardian of them both, St. Joseph.



## Reviews

KON-TIKI. Thor Heyerdahl. New York: Rand, McNally, 1950.

BETWEEN CALLAO, PERU, and the nearest Polynesian island, there are 4,000 nautical miles, millions of fish and incalculable tons of salt water. To a modern seaman, astride the firm decks of a well-equipped vessel, these are facts fit for little more than idle speculation. But to six men on a raft they spell a host of consequences measured in life-and-death proportions. To the six men aboard the balsa raft, *Kon-Tiki*, these facts were the constant concern, delight, and monotony of 101 days of life on the open sea.

The presence of these men aboard a raft in mid-ocean in the late spring and summer of 1947 was not accidental, but, rather, was the result of deliberate and careful planning. Thor Heyerdahl, leader and narrator of the expedition, in previous trips to the Polynesian islands had acquired, in addition to anthropological discoveries, knowledge of the customs and the legends of the natives. Noting the similarities of these with those of the native Indians of Peru, he evolved his private theory of the possibilities of the ancestors of the Polynesians having migrated from that section of South America, a theory that did not find easy acceptance among leading anthropologists. Somewhat stubborn and a little more than daring, Heyerdahl secured financial backing and enlisted the aid of five fellow Scandinavians to put into actuality his proposed theory. The result has produced some of the most fascinating, non-fiction reading since Richard Haliburton.

The *Kon-Tiki*, though something of a small testing ground for Army survival equipment, was made of balsa and lashed together with hemp after the best primi-

tive fashion of the early Peruvians. In steady, silent progress it mastered the ocean. It proved sturdy and defiant amid the huge seas in the tropical storms, but not with complete immunity; it came to grief on a coral reef at the end of its journey some few hundred yards from land.

However, of most absorbing interest are the endless parade of curious fish and the numberless incidents of adventure and excitement that filled the daily life of these half dozen men on so small an area as a raft. This Heyerdahl records in simple, unadorned prose. He makes no attempt to put it into diary or log form. He merely tells it much like one recounting a high point in life after a lapse of some years. It is good reading; it is good adventure.

GAINES BATEMAN

SOUTHERN LEGACY. Hodding Carter. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1950.

TO MOST AMERICANS, the eleven states lying "below the Mason-Dixon" are an enigma, impossible to comprehend. They are the unruly black sheep in an otherwise respectable family of forty-eight. Their attitudes on racial discrimination are "un-American"; they are unwilling to "let bygones be bygones," and they insist, even today, on continuing to fight the Civil War. They are backward; they regard any non-Southerner as a "foreigner"—in short, they are a collective blot on the otherwise glorious pages of American history.

To these puzzled Americans, *Southern Legacy* is an answer.

Mr. Hodding Carter has written both a straight-forward defense of the South and an acknowledgment of its faults. While he is, on the one hand, stalwartly guarding the



Southern attitude, he is, on the other hand, making known Southern shortcomings and suggesting the solutions.

*Southern Legacy* is written humanely. It contains a wealth of anecdote, both humorous and pathetic, combined with the perspective of a native Mississippian turned a Northern editor. Mr. Carter pigeonholes Southern thought into categories ranging from Southern chivalry to the everpresent tension of race. He delves into the infamous speeches of Theodore G. Bilbo and traces the effects of Huey Long. He discusses poor whites, the Ku Klux Klan, interracial promiscuity, backwoods religion, extralegal "justice," Southern clannishness, Northern interference, and the unfavorable statistics which mirror Southern unrest.

And when he has finished, Mr. Carter leaves with the reader this plea, misted in a Southern drawl:

"Just leave us alone!"

"We admit we have faults, just as do all sections of the nation. We admit that these faults are deepseated, and will take much wisdom to undo them. And therein lies the answer.

"These faults of ours, products as they are of time-hardened causes, will take a comparable time to be solved.

"But solved they are becoming, for we are making progress. Slow progress, true, but progress, nevertheless. And unless we are interfered with again by outsiders who do not fully comprehend, we will reach a solution.

"Just leave us alone!"

ROBERT BRAITHWAITE

*BOSWELL'S LONDON JOURNAL 1762 - 1763. James Boswell. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1950.*

Until very recently, the fame of James Boswell has been only in the reflected glory

of Samuel Johnson. His biography of that gentleman has ranked among the foremost in English literature, and he has been duly, if reservedly, acclaimed for it.

Now, however, a new ray of his genius shines forth from among the pages of a great collection of forgotten manuscripts. For now Boswell emerges as a fascinating, complex personality in himself, in the pages of the *London Journal*, the first of a projected series of 40 volumes on his life and times. Here we see some of the little known facets of any man of letters, among them his extreme youth in all its curiosity, and all its malleability.

Since their author's death, the voluminous personal papers of James Boswell have been jealously kept secret by a long succession of well-meaning heirs, who have vigorously resisted any attempts by scholars to find or organize the material. It had become widely separated, and the trails have led from the dim attics and recesses of one castle or ancestral estate to another. To date, most of the finds have been in Scotland. It was at Malahide Castle, in Ireland, however, that the present segment of his work was finally unearthed, in 1931. The long intervening period has been the occasion of a continuous legal battle for the possession of the papers now at last safely settled in Yale University.

The *London Journal* is essentially a running commentary on the activities, thoughts, conversations and morals of the author and his acquaintances during a nine-month portion of his life. As he developed into young manhood, Boswell gradually acquired a love for life, and a gregariousness, which by virtue of his noble birth, ran to expensive tastes. Thus it was, that in 1762, at the age of twenty-two, he rebelled against the enclosures of his austere Scottish parents, and their ambitions for him. His father wanted him to study law; he



had other ideas. He wished to go to London, there to secure a commission in the King's Guards, with the help of the handful of distinguished personages whom he knew through his family. With this appointment, his days could be spent in London, rubbing elbows with all its gay and fascinating people, and absorbing its many-sided existence. While diligently working toward his commission, he was equally diligent in his pursuit of all the experiences which London had to offer. And these ranged, for him, from viewing the best artistic productions, and conversing with the best people on the most laudable subjects, down to entertaining the basest ideas and acting upon them. He was licentious to the extreme, and maintained a constant traffic with the prostitutes and blackguards, though principally the former, of London's after-dark.

Dominating the entire work are the author's brilliant powers of introspection. His style, too, is consistently fluid and polished. He meets people; he describes them: when Lady Northumberland had disappointed him in her promise of aid he writes: "O these Great People! . . . this woman . . . is, I fear, a fallacious hussy."

But he could praise too, and most enthusiastically. He meets Dr. Johnson in this period, and before the book's end Boswell has formed the affection for everything that Johnson says or thinks, which will color the course of his life: "In recollecting Mr. Johnson's conversation . . .

it requires more parts than I am master of even [his vanity, too, was notorious] . . . to retain that strength of sentiment and perspicuity of expression for which he is remarkable."

His dialogues were marvels of authenticity, and became frequently ludicrous: he speaks to a new dinner acquaintance:

"Boswell: 'You must know, Madam, I run up and down this town just like a wild colt'."

"Lady Mirabel: 'Why, Sir, then, don't you stray into my stable, amongst others'."

Thus is a gloss of good-natured humor spread with dexterity over the whole of his narrative. Beneath it, we may find brilliance and frequently keen perception. At times, however, he attempts to take in too much of life or of thought, for one literary gulp. And though he describes and analyzes very well, he uses only the superficial things of life on which to exert his talents. His tragi-comedy of *Louisa*, the one example of continuous narration within the book, is a wonderfully woven thing, but it is after all only the record of a long-term seduction.

It must of course be kept in mind that this is merely a personal diary, and was undoubtedly never intended by its author for publication. That it therefore lacks some elements such as continuity is therefore to be expected. And, though in the main very enjoyable, that it likewise lacks immortality is also apparent.

THOMAS J. SUESS